

# EUDOKIA MAKREMBOLITISSA AND THE ROMANOS IVÓRY

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THE difficulties encountered in establishing the dates and origins of Byzantine ivories are well known. Objective evidence, both historical and archeological, is almost entirely lacking. One of the few Byzantine carvings with an inscription identifying the historical figures it depicts is the ivory plaque, in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris, known as the Romanos ivory after the emperor represented on it (fig. 1). The plaque portrays Christ standing on a high pedestal between two imperial figures. He places His hands on the crowns and heads of the royal couple, who hold their hands in a gesture of reverence or respect.  $\overline{\text{IC}} \overline{\text{XC}}$  is carved about the head of Christ, and the inscriptions above the heads of the imperial couple read  $\text{P}\omega\text{MANOC BACIAEYC P}\omega\text{MAI}\omega\text{N}$  and  $\text{E}\nu\Delta\text{OKIA BACIAIC P}\omega\text{MAI}\omega\text{N}$ . It is not surprising that this piece, with such precise identifications, occupies a central place in the corpus of Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, who first organized the surviving Byzantine ivories.<sup>1</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann believed that the ivory portrayed Romanos II and could be dated between 945 and 949; I shall argue that it portrays Romanos IV and should be dated between 1068 and 1071.

Since Romanos IV Diogenes (1068–71) and his wife Eudokia Makrembolitissa were the only couple ever to rule as Romanos and Eudokia, the eleventh-century date had been assumed to be correct at least since the time of Du Cange.<sup>2</sup> However, the modern connoisseurs of Byzantine ivories, Hayford Peirce and Royall Tyler, began to express doubts.<sup>3</sup> They found the dating aesthetically disturbing, since it then became necessary, they believed, to separate by more than a century the Palazzo Venezia triptych (fig. 15) and the Romanos ivory, “two masterpieces so closely related in style.”<sup>4</sup> It also complicated the relationship between the Romanos ivory and a well-known Ottonian ivory, the tenth-century plaque now in the Cluny Museum which represents Otto II and his wife, the Byzantine princess Theophano, crowned by Christ (fig. 13). While of inferior quality, the Cluny plaque’s iconography, which has struck most observers as thoroughly Byzantine, is exactly the same as that of the Romanos ivory. It seemed unlikely to Peirce and Tyler that the theme of an emperor and an empress crowned or blessed together by Christ would make its first appearance in the West; they wondered “comment un tel chef-d’œuvre, plein de fraîcheur et d’original, pourrait-il être de 1067, alors qu’une imitation faible de ce même chef-d’œuvre se trouve être datée, de l’avènement d’Othon II, en 973, un siècle plus tôt?”<sup>5</sup>

Peirce and Tyler consequently proposed a date earlier by more than a century for the Romanos ivory. They noted that since the eighth century the

<sup>1</sup> *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XIII. Jahrhunderts*, II (Berlin, 1934) (hereafter Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*).

<sup>2</sup> C. Du Fresne Du Cange, *Historia Byzantina duplici commentario illustrata* (Paris, 1680), 162.

<sup>3</sup> “Deux mouvements dans l’art byzantin du X<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *Arethuse*, fasc. 16 (July, 1927), 129–36.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, “Three Byzantine Works of Art: An Ivory of the Xth Century,” *DOP*, 2 (1941), 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, “Deux mouvements,” 128.

reigning emperor was always shown bearded, "à moins qu'il ne s'agisse d'un enfant en tutelle," and that the sons of the emperor were always portrayed beardless.<sup>6</sup> Since the Romanos on the ivory was without a beard, he must be an emperor's son. One candidate met this requirement, Romanos II, the son of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, who had been made co-emperor by his father on Easter Day of 945.<sup>7</sup> At that time Romanos was six years old, and he had just been given in marriage the four-year-old daughter of Hugh of Provence. Her name was Bertha, but upon her arrival at the Byzantine court she was given, as was customary, a Greek name,<sup>8</sup> Eudokia. Peirce and Tyler argued that the Romanos ivory could therefore be dated between 945 and 949, the year of her death at the age of eight. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, "nach manchen Zweifeln" and after a point-by-point examination of the arguments, accepted the earlier date in their corpus.<sup>9</sup>

For Peirce and Tyler, redating the Romanos ivory made it possible to ascribe a Byzantine model for the Ottonian ivory. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann found the hypothesis of a tenth-century date useful to their entire view of ivory production, enabling them to see the period beginning with the reign of Constantine Porphyrogennetos as the period of intense creativity, a florescence of an art which had declined in the late antique period. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann attributed almost all Byzantine ivories to a handful of workshops. The Romanos ivory both lent its name to and anchored the date of the most "aristocratic" group of ivories, wherein the plastic relief style was achieved, and the Romanos group was used in turn to help define the style of the Nicephoros and Triptych groups. According to this theory, the "wirklich schöpferische Zeit"<sup>10</sup> was restricted to the thirty years between 940 and 970, when the various workshops were in competition with one another. By the eleventh century ivory production was waning, recorded only by a few mostly provincial pieces. The restriction of most of the major pieces of Byzantine ivory carving to the Macedonian period is such a long-held tenet of Byzantine art history that any attempt to overturn it must proceed with great caution.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

<sup>7</sup> Joannes Scylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. J. Thurn (Berlin, 1973), 237.3; G. de Jerphanion, "La date du couronnement de Romain II," *OCP*, 1 (1935), 490-95.

<sup>8</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, V.20, MGH, SS, III (Hannover, 1839), 332; *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De administrando imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins, DOT, I (Washington, D.C., 1967), 113.26.

<sup>9</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 15.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 10; see esp. the discussion, pp. 10-21. Weitzmann summarizes his views in *Byzantine Art, An European Art* (Athens, 1964), 141-45. Recently, Weitzmann has modified his view of the relationship of ivory production between the Early and Middle Byzantine periods; cf. "Ivory Sculpture of the Macedonian Renaissance," *Kolloquium über spätantike und frühmittelalterliche Skulptur*, 2 (1970), 1-12; *idem*, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, III, *Ivories and Steatites* (Washington, D.C., 1972), 1-3 and *passim*.

<sup>11</sup> Several ivories have, however, been dated later than the tenth century. A. Grabar, "Une pyxide en ivoire à Dumbarton Oaks," *DOP*, 14 (1960), 121-46, has dated a small pyxis to the fourteenth century. Weitzmann reexamines the pyxis and associates with it two pieces in the Walters Art Gallery as works of the fourteenth century; cf. *Ivories and Steatites*, 77-82. K. Wessel, "Das byzantinische Elfenbeinkästchen in Stuttgart," *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Württemberg*, 11 (1974), 7-20, assigns a date around 1300 to the Stuttgart casket. Although the date adopted by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann for the Romanos ivory has been generally accepted, there have been



### Documentary Evidence

Scholars who have attempted to date the Romanos ivory have started by inquiring which Romanos is represented. I think it is more useful to ask which Eudokia is represented: the daughter of Hugh of Provence or Eudokia Makrembolitissa, the powerful empress of the mid-eleventh century. The clue that might reveal the historical circumstances behind the Romanos ivory is the inscription above the head of Eudokia (fig. 1). While grammatically ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚ ΠΩΜΑΙΩΝ is the feminine counterpart to ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΠΩΜΑΙΩΝ, it is not simply the counterpart of the masculine title, but an unusual designation which calls for an explanation.

During the seventh and eighth centuries *basileus* replaced the Roman *augustus* as the normal appellation for the emperor.<sup>12</sup> The longer title *basileus romaion* occurs as early as the first half of the seventh century, but does not appear on coinage until the miliaresia of Michael I (811–13).<sup>13</sup> It has been argued that Michael's employment of the title was meant to make clear the limits of the imperial title granted to Charlemagne, for only the emperor of the Romans could lay claim to the universal empire.<sup>14</sup> The plural forms *basileis* and *basileis romaion* refer to both the reigning emperor and his junior colleagues. *Basilis* is the Attic feminine form of *basileus*, and consequently is found, as S. Mashev points out, infrequently in everyday speech and more often in the work of stylisticians such as Psellos.<sup>15</sup> The Koine form *basilissa* occurs along with *augusta* and *despoina* as a form of address. But *basilis(sa)*, especially in its Attic form, is applied only rarely as an official title. On coins, for example, it is used by only three empresses:<sup>16</sup> Irene, who also issued

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several dissenters, most notably A. S. Keck and C. R. Morey, review of *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, in *ArtB*, 17 (1935), 397–406, esp. 398–400; C. R. Morey, *Gli oggetti di Avorio e di Osso del Museo Sacro Vaticano* (Vatican, 1936), 23–24. See also M. Bonicatti, "Per una introduzione alla cultura medio bizantina di Constantinopoli," *RIASA*, N.S. 9 (1960), 238–39 and esp. 262–63; A. Christophilopoulou, "Ἡ ἀντιβασιλεία εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον," in *Σύμμεικτα*, 2 (1970), 75. F. Dölger, "Zum Elfenbein des Romanos und der Eudokia im Cabinet des Médailles in Paris," *Südostforschungen*, 18 (1959), 387 and note 10, accepts the tenth-century date and lists those who, by oversight or mistake, have misattributed the ivory to Romanos IV.

<sup>12</sup> G. Ostrogorsky, "Das Mitkaisertum im mittelalterlichen Byzanz," in E. Kornemann, *Doppelprinzipat und Reichsteilung im Imperium Romanum* (Leipzig, 1930), 171. On imperial titles, see L. Bréhier, "L'origine des titres impériaux à Byzance: βασιλεὺς et δεσπότης," *BZ*, 15 (1906), 161–78; Ostrogorsky, *op. cit.*, 166–78, reviewed by F. Dölger, in *BZ*, 33 (1933), 136–44; G. Ostrogorsky, "Aütokrator i Samodržac. Prilog za istorju vladalačke titulature u Vizantiji i u južnih Slovena," *Srpska kraljevska Akademija, Glas*, 84 (1935), 95–187; V. Laurent, "ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΠΩΜΑΙΩΝ: L'histoire d'un titre et le témoignage de la numismatique," *CNA*, 15 (1940), 192–217; F. Dölger, "Die Entwicklung der byzantinischen Kaisertitulatur und die Datierung von Kaiserdarstellungen in der byzantinischen Klein-kunst," *Byzantinische Diplomatie* (Ettal, 1956), 130–51; P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, III,1 (Washington, D.C., 1973) (hereafter Grierson, *DOC*, III,1 and III,2), 176–83.

<sup>13</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III,1, 178.

<sup>14</sup> This topic has been discussed often, most recently by C. N. Tsirpanlis, "Byzantine Reaction to the Coronation of Charlemagne (780–813)," *Byzantina*, 6 (1974), 345–60; earlier bibliography in G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. J. Hussey (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), 182–83.

<sup>15</sup> "Die staatsrechtliche Stellung der byzantinischen Kaiserinnen," *Byzantinoslavica*, 27 (1966), 310. The most complete treatment of the official position of the empress is in *ibid.*, 308–43; see also Ch. Diehl, *Figures byzantines*, 1st ser., 11th ed. (Paris, 1930); L. Bréhier, *Le monde byzantin*, II (Paris, 1949), 27–32; Grierson, *DOC*, III,1, 10–13.

<sup>16</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III,1, 181.

novels as *basileus*,<sup>17</sup> issued coins as BASIΛISSA during her sole reign from 797 to 802;<sup>18</sup> Zoe and Theodora are referred to as BACIΛICEIC on the coinage of their joint rule in 1042.<sup>19</sup> Eudokia Makrembolitissa made use of BACIΛ(IC) on a pattern tetarteron of the reign of Romanos IV.<sup>20</sup> The only example besides the Romanos ivory of the singular title *basilis romaion* is a silver reliquary now in Moscow which portrays Constantine X and Eudokia Makrembolitissa (fig. 12).<sup>21</sup> Since all of the women who used the title *basilis(sa)* at one point assumed the throne as sole rulers or as regents for sons in their minority, it would seem that this title was meant to imply a political position at least equal to, and more likely of greater importance than, the title *augusta*. The latter is most frequently encountered for the empress and had to be conferred by the emperor; it carried with it no right to exercise power and no role in the succession to the throne. The business of state was conducted in the names of the emperor and the co-emperor, that is, in the names of the *basileis*.

Of the two Eudokias who might appear on the ivory, little is known about the earlier one, the first wife of Romanos II.<sup>22</sup> When Paschalios, the *protospatharios* and general for Lombardy, was sent to Hugh of Provence to ask for a daughter as a bride for Romanos, the son of Constantine Porphyrogenetos, Hugh did not have any legitimate daughters left to be married. He decided to offer his illegitimate daughter Bertha, who was four years old at the time. Paschalios brought her, together with many gifts, to Constantinople, where she was renamed Eudokia in honor of her husband's grandmother, the wife of Leo VI. The wedding ceremony took place in September 944. If the ivory represents or commemorates the coronation of Romanos II and Eudokia, the suggestion adopted by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, then it would have to have been carved after Romanos was made co-emperor by his father on Easter Day of 945, so that Romanos would bear the title *basileus*, and before the death of Eudokia in 949. But it seems unlikely that Bertha could have been crowned *augusta* or permitted to use the title *basilis romaion*. In normal circumstances there was only one *augusta*, the wife or mother of the emperor; only one was needed to exercise the functions of state ceremonial, and Constantine's wife, Helena, was present for these purposes. Further, no instance is known in which the wife of the crown prince was called *augusta* or *basilis*.

<sup>17</sup> W. Ohnsorge, "Das Kaisertum der Eirene und die Kaiserkrönung Karls des Grossen," *Konstantinopel und der Okzident* (Darmstadt, 1966), 52–69, explains this as a legal convention; see also F. Dölger, "Europas Gestaltung im Spiegel der fränkisch-byzantinischen Auseinandersetzung des 9. Jahrhunderts," in *idem, Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt* (Ettal, 1953), 294–95.

<sup>18</sup> C. Morriison, *Catalogue des monnaies byzantines*, II (hereafter Morriison, *CMB*, II) (Paris, 1970), 494–95, pl. LXX; Grierson, *DOC*, III,1, 347, pl. xv.

<sup>19</sup> Morriison, *CMB*, II, 631; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 732, pl. LVIII.

<sup>20</sup> J. Sabatier, *Description générale des monnaies byzantines*, II (Paris, 1862), 171, no. 2, pl. L,13; Morriison, *CMB*, II, 651, pl. xc.

<sup>21</sup> A. Grabar, "Quelques reliquaires de saint Démétrios et le martyrium du saint à Salonique," *DOP*, 5 (1950), fig. 19; L. V. Pisarskaja, *Pamjatniki vizantijskogo iskusstva V–XV vekov v Gosudarstvennoj Oružejnoj palate* (Leningrad-Moscow, 1964), 16, pl. xi.

<sup>22</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, Bonn ed. (1838), p. 431, *Lib.* VI, 46; Joannes Scylitzes, ed. Thurn (note 7 *supra*), 231.35; Symeon Magister, Bonn ed. (1838), 748.48; Georgius Monachus, Bonn ed. (1838), 917.54. See also note 8 *supra*.

There is, on the other hand, ample evidence that Eudokia Makrembolitissa used the title *basilis* and also resorted to the relatively uncommon iconography found on the Romanos ivory. Eudokia, the niece of the Patriarch Michael Keroularios, was married first to Constantine X Doukas and later to Romanos IV; between their reigns she herself sat on the throne.<sup>23</sup> Constantine came to the throne from the presidency of the Senate after Isaac Komnenos' abdication in November 1059. After his accession and coronation, he had Eudokia acclaimed *augusta*.<sup>24</sup> Eudokia played an important role in Constantine's attempt to secure dynastic succession for his sons, a role which suggests that she was an empress of more than ordinary influence.

Although Constantine had raised his two sons, Michael and Constantios, to the rank of co-emperors, it is Eudokia who appears with him on both his copper and silver coinage. Both the absence of his sons and the presence of his wife are unusual; Maslev has counted no more than a half-dozen empresses after the sixth century who appear on their husbands' coinage.<sup>25</sup> Placing imperial portraits on copper issues breaks the practice of more than three-quarters of a century, during which time only anonymous folles had been issued.<sup>26</sup> Constantine and Eudokia are depicted on a follis standing and holding the labarum between them (fig. 2). The figure of Eudokia has taken the traditional place of honor, to the spectator's left, but her hand is placed beneath the hand of Romanos on the labarum, perhaps indicating her subordination.<sup>27</sup> On Constantine's miliaresion, Eudokia has taken the place to the spectator's right (fig. 3), which is traditionally given to the co-emperor and successor to the throne.<sup>28</sup> Eudokia and her husband are here called *pistoi basileis romaion*.

There are also two representations of the double coronation of Constantine and Eudokia that have been preserved. One is in a manuscript, a *Parallela Patrum* (Paris. gr. 922, fol. 6<sup>r</sup>) which belonged to Eudokia (fig. 11).<sup>29</sup> On folio 6 the Virgin is depicted as a full-length figure placing her hands on the heads of Constantine X on the left and Eudokia on the right. On either side stand the two sons who had been elevated as co-emperors, Michael on the left, somewhat larger in size, and Constantios on the right. Both sons receive crowns

<sup>23</sup> On Eudokia generally, see N. Oikonomidès, "Le serment de l'imperatrice Eudocie (1067): un épisode de l'histoire dynastique de Byzance," *REB*, 21 (1963), 101–28. See also J. L. M. Flach, *Die Kaiserin Eudocie Macrembolitissa* (Tübingen, 1876); A. Christophilopoulou, 'Εκλογή, 'Αναγόρευσις καὶ Στέψις τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος (Athens, 1956), 118–20; *idem*, 'Η ἀντιβασιλεία εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον (note 11 *supra*), 65–75; D. Polemis, *The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (London, 1968), 29, 34 note 48; Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (note 14 *supra*), 341, 344 ff.; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 764–66, 779–82, 785–88.

<sup>24</sup> Zonaras, Bonn ed. (1897), 681.

<sup>25</sup> Maslev, *op. cit.* (note 15 *supra*), 317–19.

<sup>26</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 765.

<sup>27</sup> Morrisson, *CMB*, II, pl. LXXXIX, AE/27; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, pl. LXIV, 8.10.

<sup>28</sup> Morrisson, *CMB*, II, 644, pl. LXXXVIII, AR/01, AR/02; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 771, pl. LXIV, AR/4.

<sup>29</sup> Descriptions in H. Bordier, *Description des peintures et autres ornements contenus dans les manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris, 1883), 126–28; and *Byzance et la France médiévale. Manuscrits à peintures du II<sup>e</sup> au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1958), 18, no. 28. Reproduction in K. Wessel, *Die Kultur von Byzanz* (Frankfurt, 1970), 343, fig. 199.

on their heads from angels descending from the upper corners of the miniature. Closer to the Romanos ivory, however, is a scene on the lower zone of rectangular panels of the silver octagonal reliquary in Moscow (fig. 12). It shows a half-figure of Christ crowning or blessing an emperor and empress who are identified by full inscriptions. Next to the emperor the inscription reads: ΚΩΝ(CTANTINOC) EN Χ(PICT)Ω ΤΩ Θ(E)Ω ΠICTOC BACIΛ(EVC) AVTΩKRAT(ΩP) PΩME(ΩN) Ο ΔΘKAC, and next to the empress: + EVΔOKIA EN Χ(PICT)Ω ΤΩ Θ(E)Ω M(E)Γ(AΛH) BACI(ΛIC) PΩMEΩN. Here Eudokia is accompanied by a number of accoutrements of power which, when used together, are unusual for an empress. She holds the orb in her hand, and she is given the full title *basilis romaion*, as well as the epithet "the great," which generally, as Dölger has explained, means the senior emperor;<sup>30</sup> here, however, its use cannot make Eudokia equal in status to Constantine, the *autokrator*. Thus, it would seem that the imperial portrait on the reliquary, although of inferior quality, reflects, as Grabar has pointed out, "une iconographie courante et officielle."<sup>31</sup> Eudokia's prominence suggests that her status was not unlike that of a co-emperor or successor to the throne; at the very least the evidence indicates that Eudokia was or had become a major figure in the imperial dynasty of Constantine X.

It is not exactly clear just how or why Eudokia came to achieve this position during her husband's reign. Perhaps Constantine sensed that his health was failing and recognized his wife's ability to maintain their family on the throne. For when Constantine Doukas fell seriously ill in the fall of 1066, he "entrusted," as Psellos tells us, "all his duties to his wife, Eudocia. In his opinion, she was the wisest woman of her time, and he thought that no one was better qualified to educate his sons and daughters."<sup>32</sup> Constantine even went so far as to ask Eudokia to promise, in the form of an official oath sworn before her husband, the patriarch, the senate, and the synod, never to marry again.<sup>33</sup> In this oath, Eudokia declared that in case her husband should die before her, she would not try to contract a second marriage and would endeavor to guard their children from all obstacles that might endanger their reign. She further promised not to introduce her relatives into the government nor to remove the Caesar, the brother of the emperor, from imperial favor. In a study of the oath, Nicolas Oikonomidès points out that if Constantine were unable to prevent a second marriage, such an event might well take place and endanger the succession of his sons.<sup>34</sup>

When Constantine died in May 1067, the Empire passed into Eudokia's hands. All historical sources agree that she was in complete control of the government. Attaliates states succinctly that "after the emperor died, the

<sup>30</sup> Dölger, "Europas Gestaltung" (note 17 *supra*), 311–12. See also Gy. Moravcsik, "Sagen und Legenden über Kaiser Basileos I.," *DOP*, 15 (1961), 61–63.

<sup>31</sup> Grabar, "Quelques reliquaires" (note 21 *supra*), 25.

<sup>32</sup> Michael Psellos, *Chronographia*, trans. E. Sewter (London, 1953), 262; ed. and trans. E. Renauld, II (Paris, 1928), 151.

<sup>33</sup> Oikonomidès, *op. cit.* (note 23 *supra*), 105–8.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 120–21.

*augusta* embraced for herself the power like an emperor.”<sup>35</sup> Psellos praises her administration and her loyalty to her sons:

When the Empress Eudocia, in accordance with the wishes of her husband, succeeded him as supreme ruler, she did not hand over the government to others. Far from choosing to spend most of her life in idleness at home, while the magistrates had charge of public affairs, she assumed control of the whole administration in person. . . . She made herself conversant with all her duties, and wherever it was practicable, she took part in all the processes of government, the choice of magistrates, civil affairs, revenues and taxes. Her pronouncements had the note of authority which one associates with an emperor. Nor was this surprising, for she was an exceedingly clever woman.<sup>36</sup>

Though her rule as senior emperor was to last only seven months, during that time she strictly observed Constantine’s wishes. The gold coinage of the period, for example, represents Eudokia in the center with her son Michael on the left and her younger son Constantios on the right (fig. 4).<sup>37</sup> Psellos, his language perhaps reflecting the public iconography of the coinage, says that “on either side of her were the two sons, both of whom stood almost rooted to the spot, quite overcome with awe and reverence for their mother.”<sup>38</sup>

However, the decision was made that Eudokia should marry again. Because of the Turkish incursions in Asia Minor a competent military man was needed to take charge of affairs; this was the reason Eudokia gave Psellos for her decision to marry Romanos Diogenes, a distinguished member of the Cappadocian military aristocracy.<sup>39</sup> Eudokia also believed that she would be able to maintain the upper hand over Romanos and to protect the status of her sons. Psellos says that Eudokia, who earlier had spared Romanos from execution, thought “that her own supremacy would be assured if she made him emperor. He would, she believed, never again oppose her wishes. It was a reasonable conjecture, but her plans went astray.”<sup>40</sup> He also reports that the night before Romanos’ coronation, which took place on January 1, 1068, Eudokia went to the chamber of her eldest son, Michael, where she explained the approaching event to him: “‘Rise up,’ she said, ‘and receive your stepfather. Although he takes the place of your father, he will be a subject, not a ruler. I, your mother, have bound him in writing to observe this arrangement.’”<sup>41</sup> The historians do not make clear what these constraints were, although they attest to their existence and also to Romanos’ evasion of them.

<sup>35</sup> Attaleiates, Bonn ed. (1858), 92.191; Cedrenus, II, Bonn ed. (1839), 659, 660. Christophilopoulou has collected the sources on this point, in *Ἡ ἀντιβασιλεία εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον* (note 11 *supra*), 66–67.

<sup>36</sup> *Chronographia*, trans. Sewter, 264; ed. Renauld, II, 152.

<sup>37</sup> Morrisson, *CMB*, II, pl. LXXXIX, AV/01, AV/02; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, pl. LXV, AV/1.2, 1.3.

<sup>38</sup> *Chronographia*, trans. Sewter, 264; ed. Renauld, II, 152–53. See also Zonaras (note 24 *supra*), 682.

<sup>39</sup> Oikonomides, *op. cit.*, 124–27.

<sup>40</sup> *Chronographia*, trans. Sewter, 268; ed. Renauld, II, 157.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, trans. Sewter, 267; ed. Renauld, II, 156.

Zonaras says that “when Romanos Diogenes took hold of the rule of the Romans, he succeeded in establishing himself against the expectations of the ruling Eudokia.”<sup>42</sup> Such constraints were not without precedent. Michael V, for example, entered his brief reign with a position subordinate to that of Zoe; he seems to have promised to be emperor in name only.<sup>43</sup> The coinage struck during the period from Romanos’ accession until his defeat at Manzikert reflects his at least officially subordinate position.

On the histamenon (fig. 6), the most valuable denomination of the realm, the obverse or convex side is not occupied, as would be expected, by Christ, but by the standing figures of the three sons of Constantine X: Michael, Andronikos, and Constantios.<sup>44</sup> Andronikos was made co-emperor by Romanos after his own coronation, a fact which would be difficult to explain unless Eudokia pressed to secure the succession of her sons. Romanos and Eudokia are portrayed on the reverse of the coin. The reason for this unusual placing of the emperor is, I think, that Romanos is to be ranked after Eudokia’s children by her first marriage. Michael and Constantios were crowned earlier than Romanos, and the coin is, as Grierson observes, “technically not [Romanos] at all,” but belongs to Michael and his brothers.<sup>45</sup> It is the iconography of the reverse which is most important for my argument, for it is almost identical to the iconography of the Romanos ivory: the full-length figure of Christ is shown crowning Romanos and Eudokia. Both hold the orb. Grierson notes that this histamenon belongs, “so far as the type is concerned, to the class of marriage solidi, a form of coin that had not been seen since the end of the fifth century, though examples of that period had been ceremonial issues struck in minute quantities while their eleventh-century counterpart formed the main coinage of Romanus IV’s reign.”<sup>46</sup> I shall explain shortly why this coin, as well as the Romanos ivory, does not commemorate the event of Romanos’ marriage; here I would like to mention that this iconography appears on coinage for the first time. The same pair of scenes as on the histamenon also appears on imperial seals of their reign, often with the legend *Romanos kai Eudokia basileis romaion* (fig. 7).<sup>47</sup> There is an exceptional seal which shows on one side Christ crowning Romanos and Eudokia, and on the other side the Virgin crowning Michael and Constantios (fig. 5).<sup>48</sup> Andronikos’ absence suggests that he had not yet been crowned. After he became co-emperor this iconography could no longer be used; the three sons standing together, as on the histamenon and the seals, may be considered its replacement. It may also be inferred from this seal that a double coronation was not tied to the theme of marriage. Since depictions of the coronation of the co-emperors are

<sup>42</sup> Zonaras, 687–88.

<sup>43</sup> *Chronographia*, trans. Sewter, 86–87; ed. Renauld, II, 87–88.

<sup>44</sup> Morrisson, *CMB*, II, pls. LXXXIX–XC, AV/01–AV/07; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, pl. LXV, AV/1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.4.

<sup>45</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 786.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> G. Zacos and A. Vegler, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, I (Basel, 1972), 83–84, nos. 93a–d; plate vol. I, pl. 24.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 82, no. 92; plate vol. I, pl. 24.

rare and since this particular juxtaposition of scenes is unique, this seal with its two double coronations displays the extent of experimentation undertaken to emphasize the position of Eudokia's sons as rightful successors to the throne.

There is other evidence from the coinage suggesting the special place held by Eudokia. A pattern for a tetarteron in the Bibliothèque Nationale, of which no coins were struck, depicts frontal busts of Eudokia on the obverse, holding the labarum and the globus, and Romanos on the reverse, holding the akakia and the globus (fig. 8).<sup>49</sup> Since Eudokia's scepter and title of *basilis* outrank Romanos' akakia and title of *despotes*, the implicit contrast in favor of the empress would perhaps have claimed too much. Such a coin was struck only once, and under different circumstances: at the end of the eighth century Irene usurped the obverse for herself and left the reverse for her son, the titular emperor.<sup>50</sup> The tetarteron actually struck dilutes the statement implicit in the pattern. It shows the Virgin on the obverse and Romanos and Eudokia on the reverse, holding between them the globe with a long cross, a gesture symbolizing that they rule the world together (fig. 9).<sup>51</sup> It is only on the one-third miliaresion, a small silver coin, that the bust of Romanos occupies the reverse alone; the Virgin appears on the obverse (fig. 10).<sup>52</sup>

### Iconography

There is thus a more than adequate historical context to explain why Eudokia Makrembolitissa is depicted on the Romanos ivory. The theme of the ivory further supports the identification of the figures as Romanos IV and Eudokia. It might be supposed, however, that the iconography represents not the coronation of an imperial couple but the blessing of their marriage by Christ. Obviously the notion of marriage is there, as it is with all coronations of couples, but it can be shown that marriage is less important as a theme in these representations than the imperial legal status conferred by the coronation. I would like to develop this idea briefly in the context of a few remarks about the Otto and Theophano ivory mentioned above (p. 307).

It has always been assumed that the Ottonian work can only have been based on a Byzantine model. If this was not the Romanos ivory, as my arguments suggest, then it must be admitted that no such object has survived from the tenth century. However, since the style and iconography of the Ottonian ivory are thoroughly Byzantine, there must have been an earlier model similar to the Romanos ivory. The close connections between the Ottonians and the Byzantines would have made such a model available. As P. E. Schramm has pointed out, the likely donor of the plaque is the figure in the left corner portrayed in a posture of *proskynesis*, who calls himself

<sup>49</sup> Morrisson, *CMB*, II, 651, pl. xc.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 492, pl. LXIX, AV/04–AV/06; Grierson, *DOC*, III,1, 338–39, pl. xiv.

<sup>51</sup> Morrisson, *CMB*, II, 650, pl. xc, AV/08–AV/11; Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 791–92, pl. LXV, 3.11.

<sup>52</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 795, pl. LXV, 7.1, 7.2.

ΔΟΥΛΟC ΙΩΑΝΝΗC in the inscription between Christ and Otto,<sup>53</sup> Schramm identified him as the Calabrian monk John Philagathos.<sup>54</sup> Philagathos played an important role as a mediator between East and West and had an extraordinary career at the Ottonian court, later becoming bishop and even anti-pope.<sup>55</sup> What was the occasion for his gift to the imperial couple? We know that in 980 Philagathos became the Italian chancellor of the Ottonian emperor. In March of 982 Otto besieged Tarentum, and in response the Italian chancellery expanded Otto's imperial title of *Imperator* to *Imperator Romanorum*, encroaching on the Eastern notion that only the Byzantine emperor was the sole ruler of the Romans.<sup>56</sup> This expanded title of *Imperator Romanorum* is inscribed on the ivory plaque above the head of the emperor; hence the ivory must have been commissioned by Philagathos, not as a gift for Otto's wedding in 972 but on the occasion of his extended imperial claims in the spring of 982.<sup>57</sup> The ivory thus states in a formal way the newly asserted claim of Western imperial propaganda: having a Byzantine princess by his side, even one who was not born to the purple, Otto II could the better justify his claims to the title *Imperator Romanorum* and thus strengthen his position in the Mediterranean.

<sup>53</sup> "Kaiser, Basileus und Papst in der Zeit der Ottonen," *Kaiser, Könige und Päpste*, III (Stuttgart, 1969), 214. Much has been written on the inscription of this ivory. All scholars agree that the inscriptions above the heads of the couple contain a mixture of Latin and Greek letters. F. Dölger, "Die Ottonenkaiser und Byzanz," *Karolingische und Ottonische Kunst*, ForschKA, III (Wiesbaden, 1957), 56, reads these inscriptions as follows: Otto Imp(erator) R(o)man(or)um A(YFOYCTO)C and ΘΕΟΦΑΝΩ Imp(eratrix) A(YFOYCTO)C. The last word has always been read, whether in Greek or Latin, as the masculine *augustus/os*, and the remark made that the scribe, not knowing better, gave the masculine ending even to Theophano (Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 51; P. E. Schramm and F. Mutherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* [Munich, 1962], 144, no. 73; O. Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* [New York, 1970], 84). I do not think that the inscriptions ever intended to render the Greek word ΑΥΦΟΥCΤΟC. I read the titles completely in Latin, except for the name of ΘΕΟΦΑΝΩ: OTTO IMP(ERATOR) P(o)mΔN(or)um Δ[V]G(USTUS) and ΘΕΟΦΑΝΩ IMP(ERATRIX) Δ[V]G(USTA). Judging from the mistakes made in these inscriptions, the person commissioned to incise them must have been a Greek, probably one from southern Italy with some knowledge of Latin or spoken Italian. Only a Greek could have made such mistakes: note the P (rho) used in *Romanorum* and the consistent use of the Greek Δ. The abbreviation for *augustus*, which in Latin consists of the first three letters AVG, must have been what he had in front of him. Not understanding it correctly, he made ΔC out of AG. The same abbreviation probably stood also for Theophano. Other observations which support the theory that the carver was a Greek from southern Italy are that his Greek letters are correct and that the second inscription between Christ and Otto is correct Greek with standard abbreviations:

ΚΕ ΒΟΗΘΙ Τ' Ε ΔΩ ΜΩ ΔΜΕΝ

Κ(ΥΠΙ)Ε ΒΟΗΘ(Ε)Ι Τ(Ω) C(Ω) ΔΩΛ(Ω) ΙΩ(ΑΝΝΗ) (ΜΟΝ)ΑΧ(Ω) ΑΜΕΝ. If the last word AMEN is read correctly, it most likely reflects the south Italian influence on Greek.

At this point I would like to express my greatest thanks to Professor Nicolas Oikonomides, who not only helped me with these inscriptions but has given generously of his time on many other occasions crucial to this paper.

<sup>54</sup> There is another ivory plaque, now in Munich (Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, no. 86, pl. xxxiv), which has a kneeling figure at the feet of the standing Hodegetria. This figure in proskynesis is almost identical to that of John Philagathos on the Otto plaque. The main difference is that here his mantle does not have the stars which decorate it in the other panel, perhaps indicating a difference between his private status as a monk before the Virgin and his official position at the court. As Goldschmidt and Weitzmann have pointed out (*ibid.*, 51), it is very likely that the same artist executed both pieces. The right side of the plaque seems to have been added later.

<sup>55</sup> Schramm, "Kaiser," 214.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 214 and 212.

<sup>57</sup> Schramm and Mutherich, *Denkmale*, 144, no. 73.



In a similar fashion political considerations stand behind the extant examples of double coronations from the Middle Byzantine period. Probably because the empress was not considered in the line of succession, her portrayal, either alone or with members of her family, never became a requirement of the official iconography. For each case in which the empress appears in a representation of a double coronation there is external evidence that explains why she played a special role in the imperial propaganda.<sup>58</sup> Constantine X, who appears with Eudokia on coinage and in double coronation scenes on the Moscow reliquary (fig. 12) and in the illustration of Paris. gr. 922, folio 6<sup>r</sup> (fig. 11), had a motive unlike Otto's for emphasizing the position of his wife within the imperial dynasty, for it was only through her that the new dynasty of the Doukas could survive on the throne after his death. Romanos IV, on the other hand, owed his imperial status to his wife, and I have argued that Eudokia expressed in the official iconography of their reign her wish to maintain the position she had enjoyed under Constantine X. From Romanos' point of view it might be said that the representations of himself together with Eudokia present him as a legitimate emperor rather than as a usurper. This can more certainly be said about Nicephoros III Botaneiates, a member of the Asiatic nobility who, after the abdication of Michael VII, marched into Constantinople and had himself crowned emperor. Although Michael, the eldest son of Eudokia Makrembolitissa, was still alive, Nicephoros married Michael's wife, the Empress Maria of Alania, "thus strengthening his alliance with the Ducas family and placating the Byzantine sentiment for legitimacy."<sup>59</sup> Nicephoros and Maria are represented crowned symmetrically by a half-length figure of Christ on the first folio of Paris. Coislin 79 (fig. 27);<sup>60</sup> small busts of the two also appear on the reverse of a miliaresion whose obverse bears the inscription *Nicephoros kai Maria Pistoi Basileis Romaion* (fig. 3).<sup>61</sup> The exception which proves the rule is the case of Michael VII. An enamel plaque now on the Khakhuli triptych in Tbilisi shows Michael and Maria of Alania crowned by a half-length figure of Christ.<sup>62</sup> Though Michael

<sup>58</sup> Two miniatures, though not of double coronations, should be recorded here, since they confirm my assertion that contingent political circumstances explain the portrayal of the empress. The earliest example from the Middle Byzantine period is an illustration in the Homilies of Gregory Nazianzus (Paris. gr. 510). One folio (Cv) shows the coronation of Basil I, another (Br) his wife Eudokia Ingerina standing between two of her sons. The poem that runs along the border describes Eudokia as "the well-branched vine bearing the grapes of the Empire." Basil, of course, had murdered Michael III to become sole ruler; Eudokia is portrayed, as she was on Basil's coinage, to publicize the new dynasty (H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale du VI<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle* [Paris, 1929], pl. xvi). There is also a miniature in cod. Sinait. 364 which depicts Christ in a mandorla with angels on either side of him and a crown suspended above the heads of Constantine IX Monomachos, Zoe, and Theodora. Constantine could only reach the throne through his association with his wife Zoe, who with her sister Theodora had occupied it before him (A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* [Paris, 1936], pl. xix, 2). A similar iconography appears in the Barberini Psalter (Vat. Barb. gr. 372, fol. 5<sup>r</sup>): the enthroned Christ holds a crown above the heads of an unidentified emperor, empress, and coemperor, each of whom is also being crowned by an angel (J. Deér, *The Dynastic Porphyry Tombs of the Norman Period in Sicily*, DOS, V [Cambridge, Mass., 1959], fig. 211).

<sup>59</sup> Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (note 14 *supra*), 348.

<sup>60</sup> Omont, *op. cit.*, pl. LXII.

<sup>61</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III, 2, 829, pl. LXIX; Morrisson, *CMB*, II, 644, pl. LXXXVIII, AR/01-02.

<sup>62</sup> K. Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels* (Greenwich, Conn., 1967), 151, fig. 38.

hardly needed Maria to establish his legitimacy, the explanation is rather simple: Maria was a Georgian princess and the plaque was most likely intended for export to her homeland, so that her inclusion was purely a piece of political flattery. Michael might also have been following his father's example, as he did on his coinage. As Grierson points out, Michael, like Constantine X, "associated his wife but not his children with him on the coins. In each case the *histamenon* was reserved for the *autocrator* alone."<sup>63</sup> The theme of the double coronation of an emperor and an empress appears only sporadically thereafter.

Finally, two other constraints on the representation of Byzantine royalty should be mentioned, since both speak against identifying the figures on the Romanos ivory as Romanos II and his child-bride, unless the ivory were unique. First, there are no instances in which the wife of a crown prince was portrayed. Secondly, there is no representation which depicts the coronation of the co-emperor without the presence of the senior emperor.<sup>64</sup>

The arguments that I have put forward can now be summarized. The effigy of the empress was never a routine part of official Byzantine iconography: in the Middle Byzantine Empire her portrayal could normally be explained by irregularities in the transfer of power. The title *basilis* is rare; *basilis romaion* occurs only on the Moscow reliquary and on the Romanos ivory. These titles imply an *augusta* of more than usual importance and power. Eudokia Makrembolitissa enjoyed an exceptional position under her first husband, Constantine X, and it was her sworn purpose to remain influential in order to ensure the succession of their sons. Further, Eudokia made extensive use of the relatively uncommon theme of the double coronation. She figures in double coronations first with Constantine on the Moscow reliquary and in the illustration in Paris. gr. 922, and then with Romanos IV on the seals and the main coinage of their realm which, with their full-figured Christ, duplicate the iconography of the Romanos ivory almost exactly. The Romanos ivory, the seals, and the *histamenon* represent that official iconography which proclaimed publicly Eudokia's major role in continuing the dynasty of the Doukas into the reign of Romanos Diogenes. Thus the diplomatic evidence combines with what is known from the historians and from the remaining artifacts to point to one conclusion: the emperor and empress on the Romanos ivory are Romanos IV Diogenes and Eudokia Makrembolitissa.

It might be argued, however, that inscriptions are applied too carelessly to works of art for purposes of dating. Dölger has studied the development of Byzantine imperial titles and their reflection in art and has established that the use of titles on imperial representations in manuscripts corresponds

<sup>63</sup> Grierson, *DOC*, III,2, 799.

<sup>64</sup> The lead seal discussed above (pp. 314–15) with the coronation of the two sons of Eudokia might be thought a counterexample, but of course it is a two-sided object and the senior rulers are portrayed on the other side. There is another example of this: Alexios I Komnenos had himself and his wife Irene represented on one side of a commemorative issue of 1092, and his son John crowned by Christ on the other, to present him as the rightful successor to the throne. Cf. Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Coin Collection, Acc. No. 69.8; Morrisson, *CMB*, II, 677, pl. xciii, EL/03.

exactly to their official use on documents and chrysobulls, even reflecting changes in the forms and popularity of specific titles in a given period.<sup>65</sup> This precision led him to suggest that the ateliers in which the manuscripts were made may have had some connection with the imperial chancellery. But he found the inscriptions on enamels and ivories “nicht so günstig im Sinne der Möglichkeit der Datierung.”<sup>66</sup> Dölger originally set out to discover whether the inscription on the coronation ivory in Moscow (fig. 17), *Konstantinos en Theo Autokrator Basileus Romaion*, was sufficient to identify the emperor depicted as Constantine VII. His answer was negative, but this conclusion needs to be qualified. The inscription on the Constantine ivory is worth as much as, but no more than, the inscriptions on coins or seals, which exhibit far greater variety than the products of the chancellery; the epithet *Romaion*, for example, provides some clues to dating but not enough to assign the ivory to Constantine VII. The inscriptions on Byzantine works of art rarely err; they never inflate titles or apply them improperly, although they may be simpler than the most complete title protocol would require. The “unusual” inscription on the Romanos ivory has caused Dölger to observe: “doch wird man hier—mit aller Vorsicht—aus dem Fehlen des αὐτοκράτωρ-Titels wenigstens eine Vermutung zugunsten Romanos’ II. (959–963) und seiner Eudokia wagen dürfen.”<sup>67</sup> Given the historical evidence, however, this “missing” title points rather to Romanos IV, for the equality of titles underscores the fact that Romanos was intended to be only a stand-in for the dynasty of the Doukas, a fact which would have been liable to misunderstanding had the title *autokrator* been applied; this title, for example, is never used on Romanos’ coinage. Having studied Dölger’s examples<sup>68</sup> as well as a number of other objects, I have concluded that inscriptions on works of art are almost always applied carefully, even when they are simplified for what may appear to be artistic reasons. Thus these inscriptions provide necessary but not sufficient criteria for dating.

### *Stylistic Considerations*

Redating the Romanos ivory to the third quarter of the eleventh century will upset the notions that Goldschmidt and Weitzmann have maintained concerning both the Romanos group of ivories and the concentration of superior ivory carving in the thirty years between 940 and 970. As a group the Romanos ivories represent the best pieces that have survived after the hiatus caused by Iconoclasm. They are famous, as Weitzmann has observed, for their “elegance, restraint and technical perfection,”<sup>69</sup> and they have “a majestic grandeur

<sup>65</sup> Dölger, “Entwicklung” (note 12 *supra*), 130–51.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>68</sup> Dölger asserts that the inscription on the Moscow reliquary is incomplete as far as Constantine X’s title goes, because the title *autokrator* is missing. Actually, it is there on the right side of Constantine. Also, in his transcription of the inscription next to Eudokia, Dölger reads ΠΙCΤΗ instead of ΜΕΓΑΛΗ.

<sup>69</sup> Weitzmann, “Ivory Sculpture of the Macedonian Renaissance” (note 10 *supra*), 4.

which is not matched in any other ivory group.”<sup>70</sup> While the redating of the Romanos ivory does not, to my mind, imply that the entire Romanos group should be placed in the eleventh century, it will shift the dating of a distinct group of ivories. To clarify this point I would like to make a few stylistic comparisons among some of the most famous pieces of the group. One of the pieces closest to the Romanos ivory in style, so close, even, that it might be said that it was executed by the same artists (compare the heads of Christ), is the well-known Harbaville triptych now in Paris (fig. 16).<sup>71</sup> A triptych that has been closely related to this piece is the one in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome (fig. 15).<sup>72</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann dated these two works to the mid-tenth century, the former because of its close stylistic connection to the Romanos ivory, the latter because of its inscription which mentions a Constantine, who, as Goldschmidt and Weitzmann have shown, must be Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos.<sup>73</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann explained what they saw as the stylistic differences between these pieces by saying that the same workshop produced them during a “Versuchszeit,” a period of experimentation when different artists competed for the same assignment.<sup>74</sup> In my opinion, the explanation for the lack of uniformity in the style of the Romanos group as established in the corpus is that the entire group cannot stand together as products of a single period.

There are only slight differences in the iconographic arrangement of the two triptychs.<sup>75</sup> The Palazzo Venezia triptych is one of the best representatives of ivory carving of the Macedonian Renaissance figure style. The figures are carved in high relief with some undercutting to give the impression of small, free-standing statues set within a frame. They have well-modeled bodies and rather rounded three-dimensional heads; the feet are placed firmly on the ground. This interest in modeling and plasticity is one of the main characteristics of the period. The figures are clad in heavy garments which fall in dense folds to create additional volume. The individual parts of the bodies are articulated by the fabric that wraps around them and falls in various layers and lengths. On a single figure the material may be stretched over one part—for example, a leg—to reveal its form under the garment, or it may be multiplied in bunches of deeply cut folds to draw attention to another area of the same body. A good example of this can be seen in the figure of Christ in the center of the panel. Many parallels can be found in other tenth-century works, especially in manuscripts. The famous mid-tenth-century Gospel Book of Stauronikita 43, with its classicizing Evangelist portraits, presents a good example where plasticity and articulation of the body are expressed through elaborate drapery patterns; this can be seen, for example, in the seated figure

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>71</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, no. 33, pl. XIII.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 31, pl. x. On the third triptych which figures in the discussion of Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, the Vatican triptych, see note 78 *infra*.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 and 33.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>75</sup> I am restricting my comparisons to the two central panels, where the carving is highest.



1. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Romanos Ivory



2. Folles of Constantine X



3. Miliaresion of  
Constantine X



4. Histamenon of Eudokia  
Makrembolitissa

### Dumbarton Oaks Collection



5. Zacos Collection, Seal of Romanos IV



6. Histamena of Romanos IV and Eudokia Makrembolitissa



7. Seals of Romanos IV and Eudokia Makrembolitissa

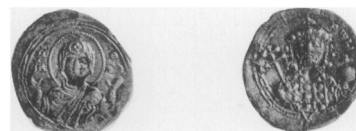
Dumbarton Oaks Collection



8. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, Pattern for a Tetarteron of Romanos IV and Eudokia Makrembolitissa



9. Tetarteron of Romanos and Eudokia Makrembolitissa



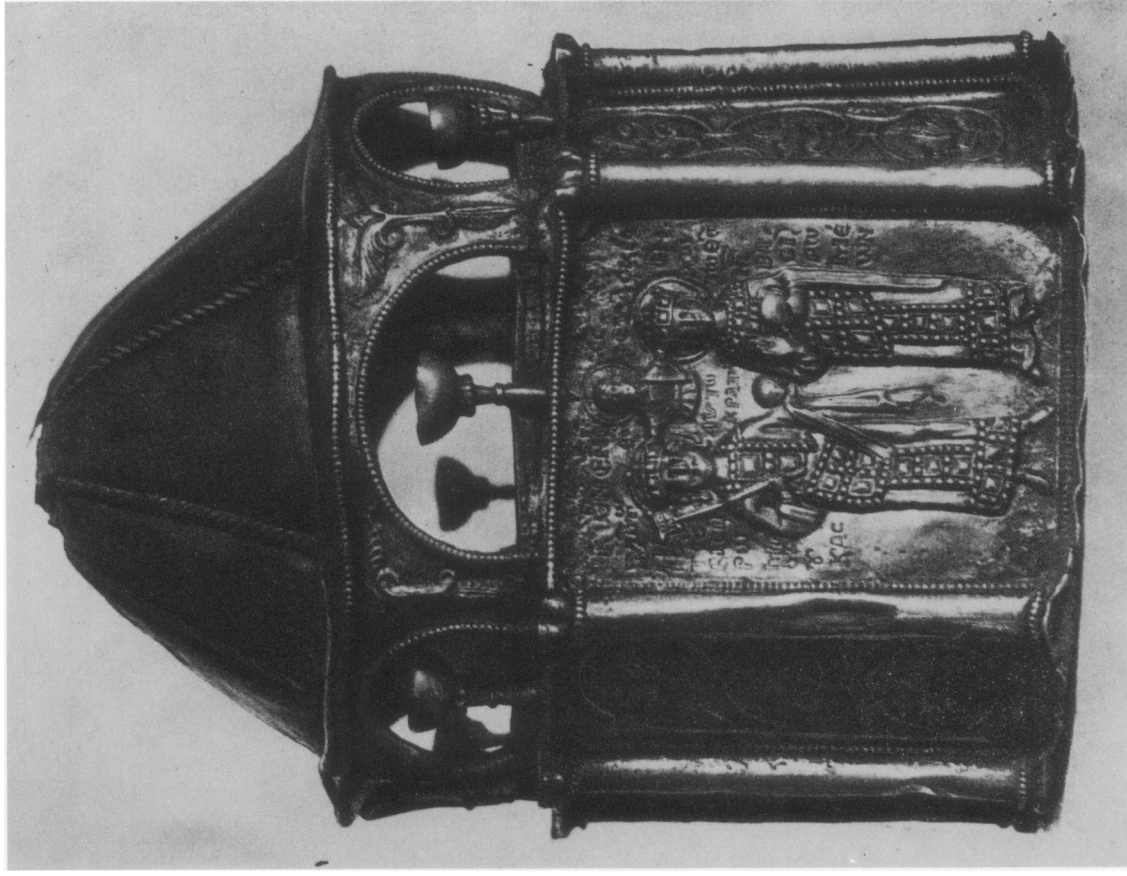
10. One-Third Miliarion of Romanos IV

Dumbarton Oaks Collection



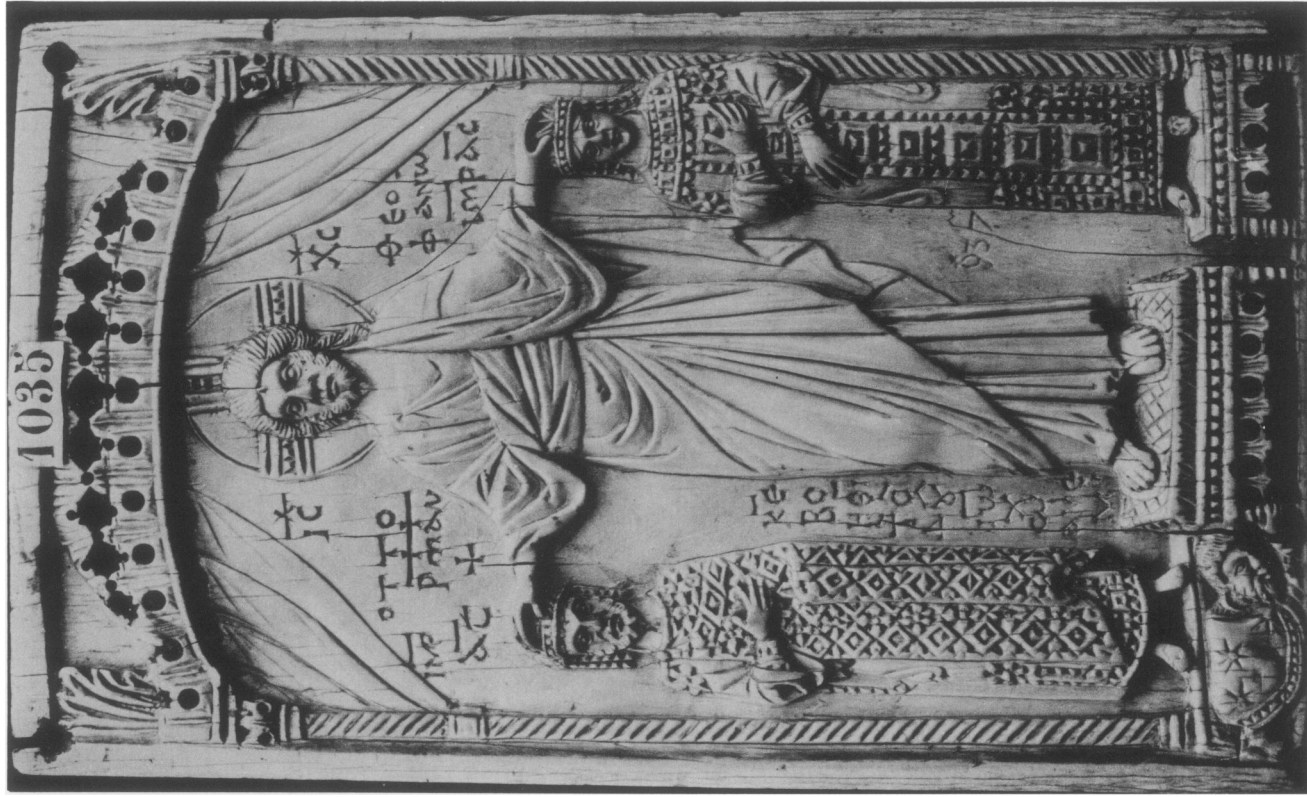


11. Paris, Bibl. Nat., cod. gr. 922, fol. 6r



12. Moscow, Kremlin Armory. Reliquary of St. Demetrios

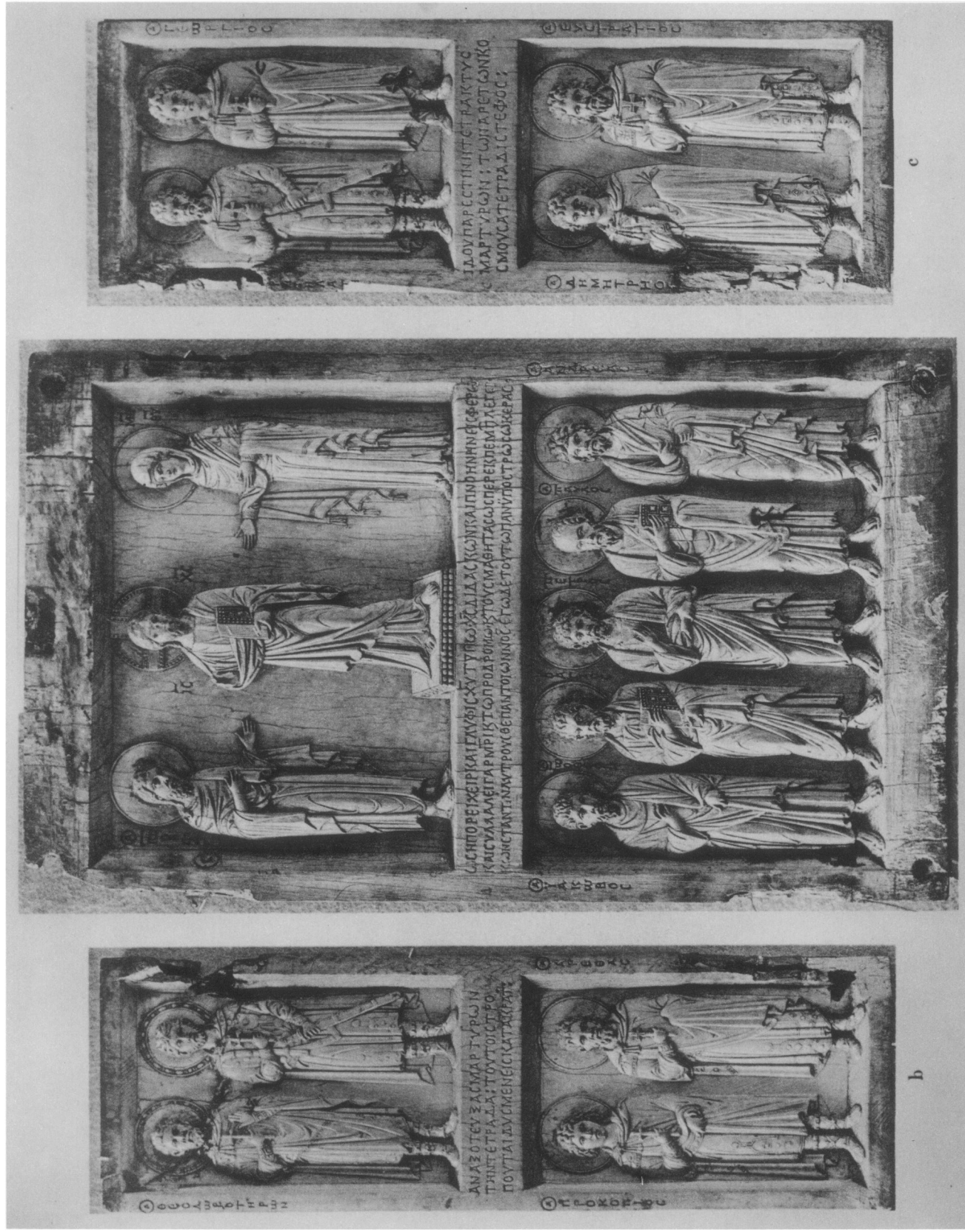




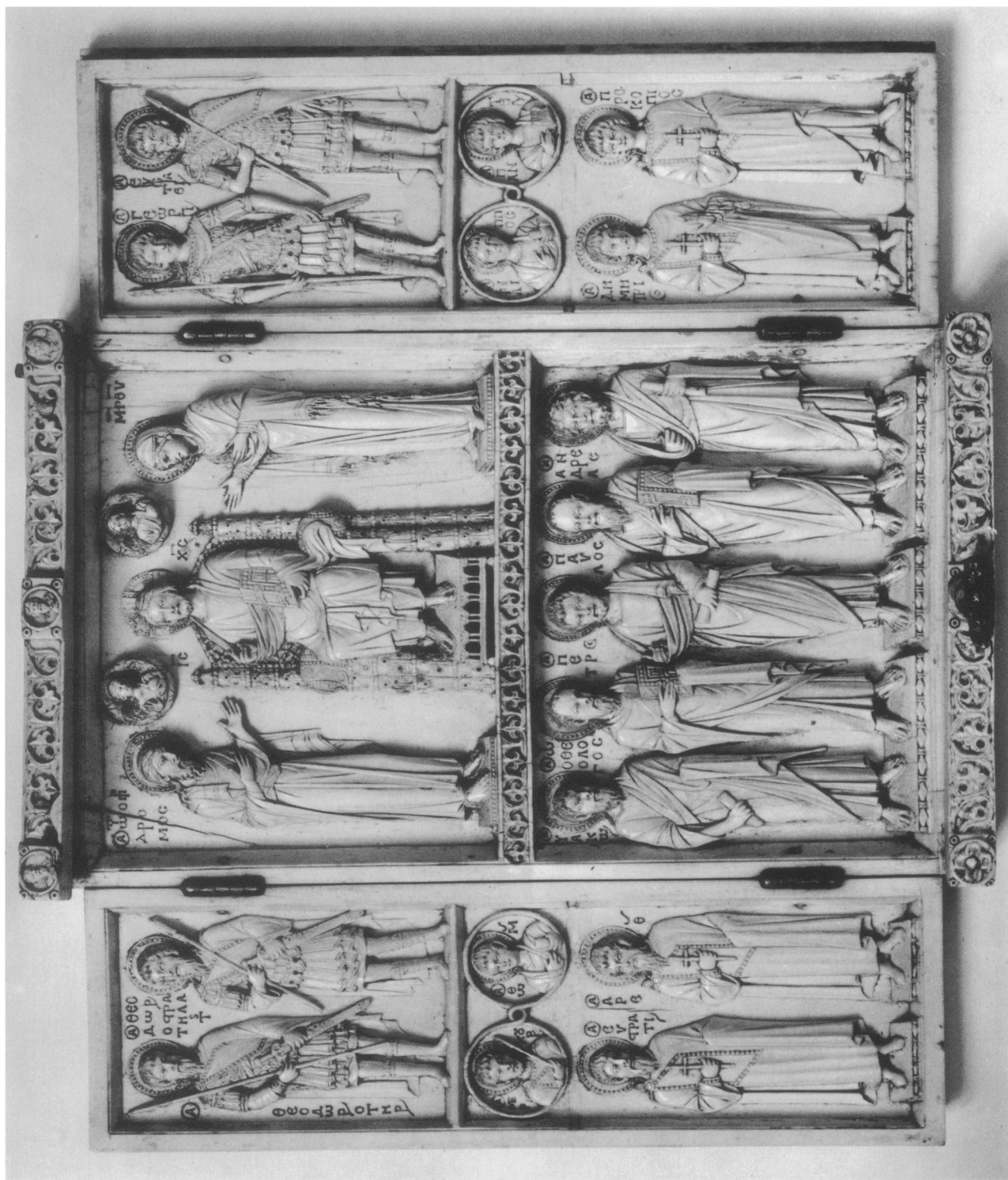
13. Paris, Cluny Museum. Ivory of Otto and Theophano



14. Mount Athos, Lavra, cod. gr. 86, fol. 65r

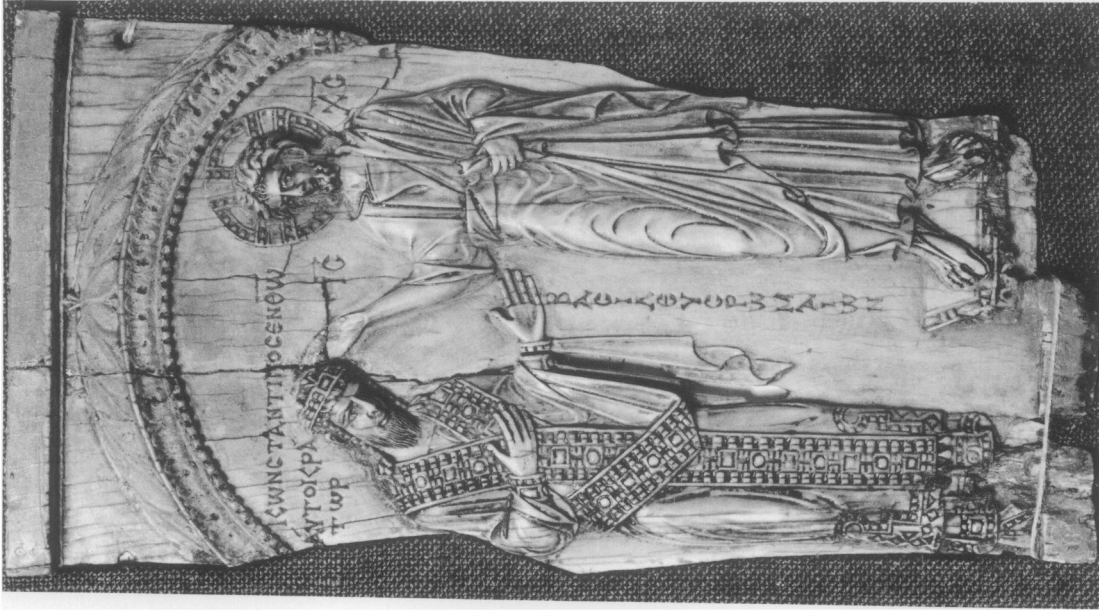


15. Rome, Palazzo Venezia. Triptych



16. Paris, Louvre. Harbaville Triptych





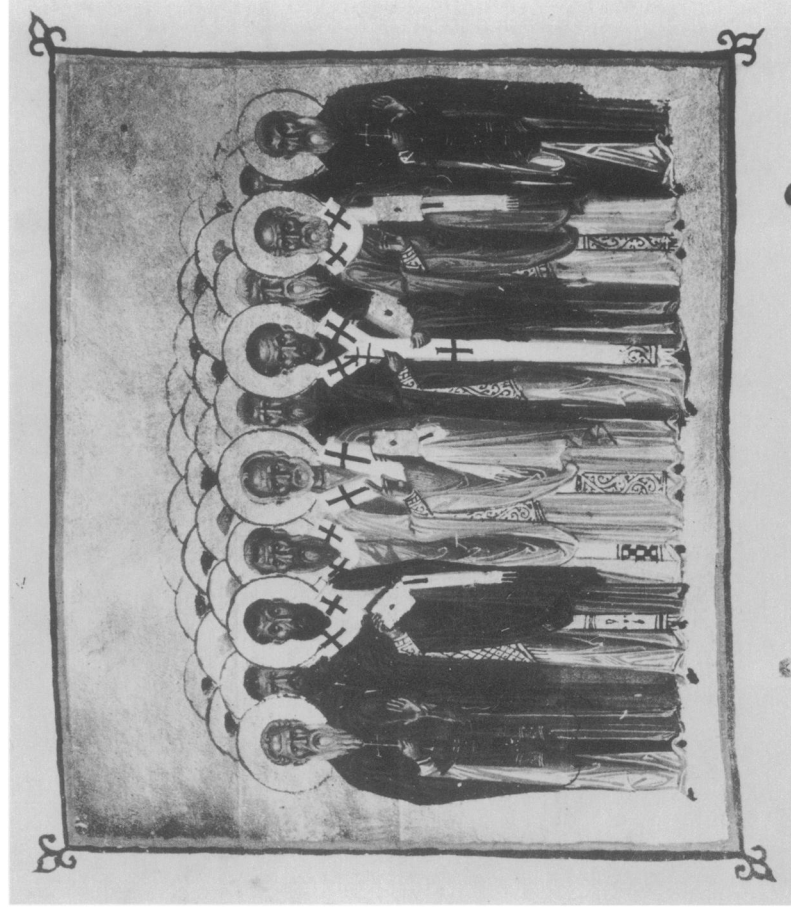
17. Moscow, State Museum of Fine Arts.  
Ivory Plaque with Constantine VII



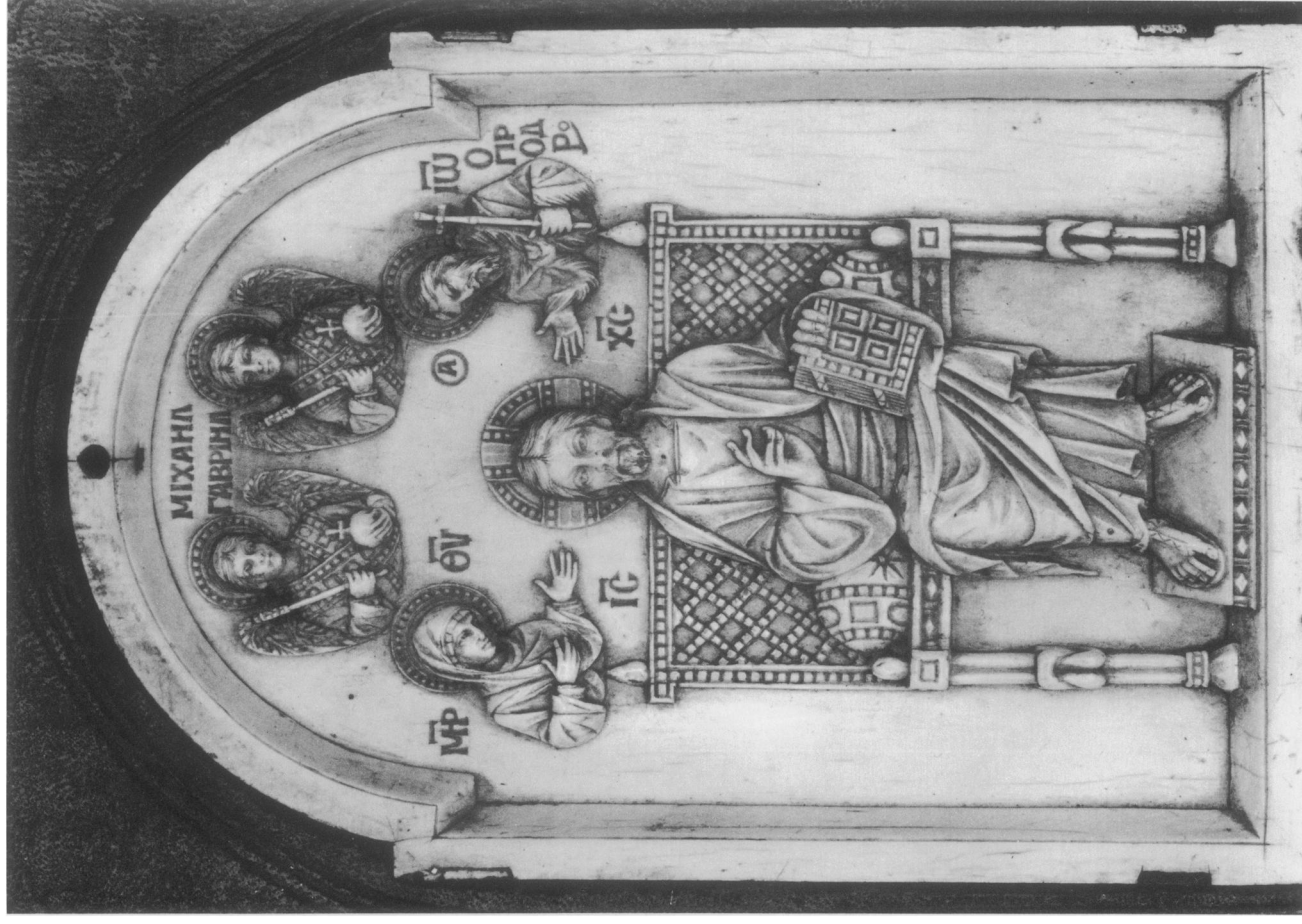
18. Paris, Bibl. Nat., cod. gr. 139, fol. 431v



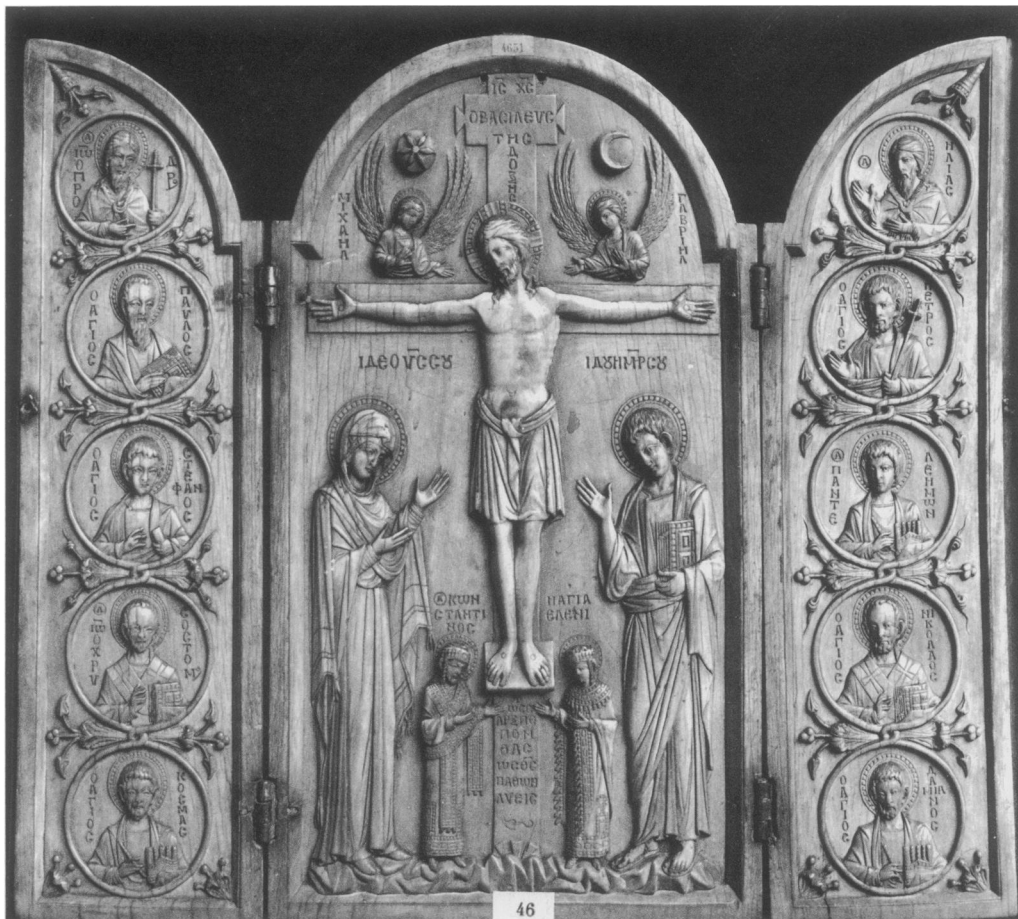
19. Vatican Library, Reg. gr. 1, fol. 8r



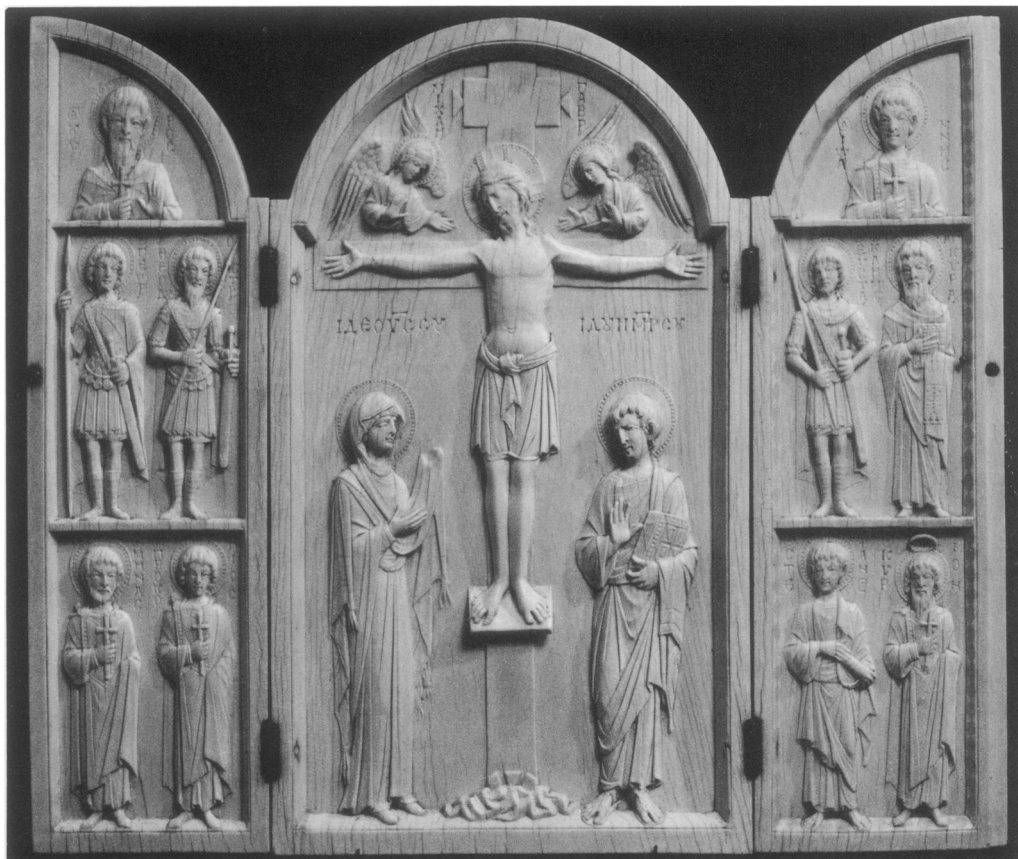
20. Mount Athos, Dionysiou, cod. gr. 587, fol. 126r



21. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz. Ivory Plaque



22. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles



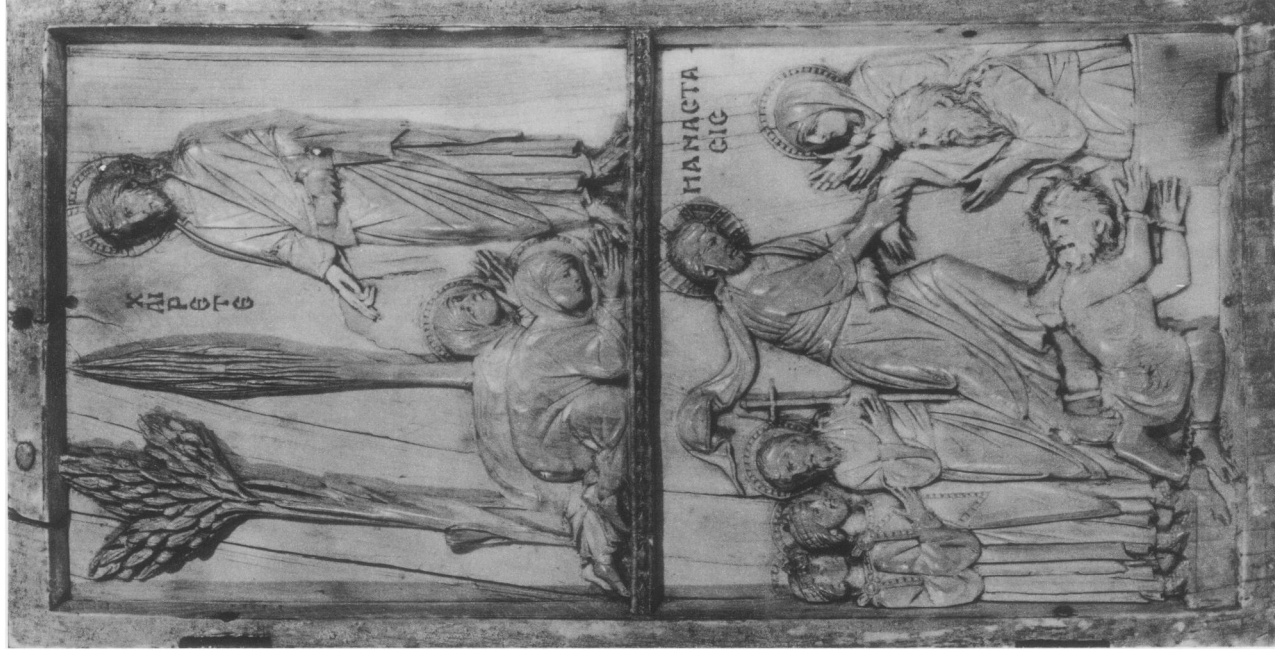
23. London, British Museum

Triptychs. The Crucifixion and Saints

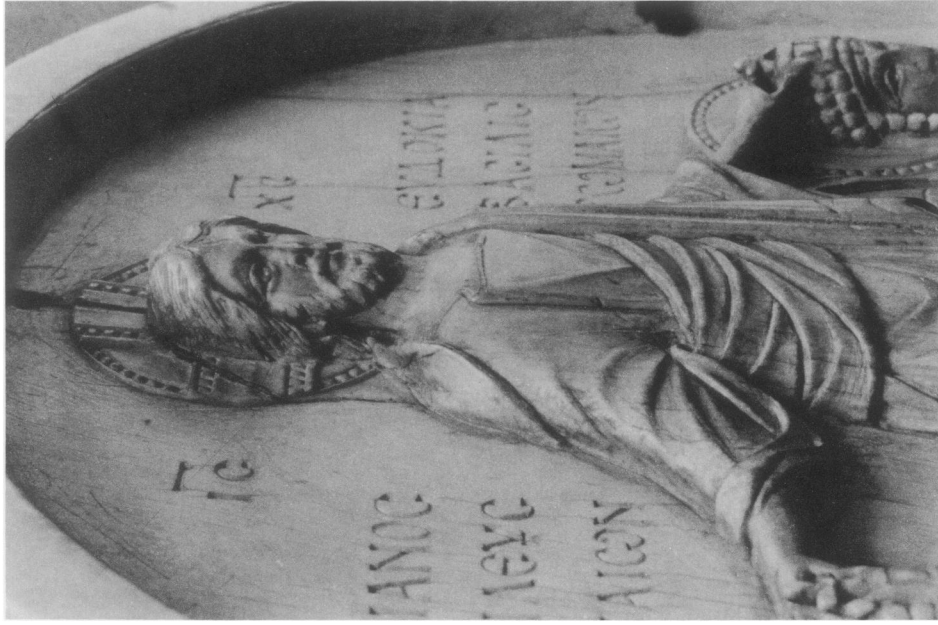




24. Hannover, Kestner Museum. Diptych, Wing,  
The Crucifixion and The Deposition



25. Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe. Diptych, Wing, Chairete  
and The Anastasis



a.



b.



c.

26. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles. Romanos Ivory, Oblique Views



of John (fol. 13<sup>r</sup>).<sup>76</sup> The closely related Gospel Book in Athens (Nat. Lib., cod. 56) offers further comparisons: for example, the figure of Matthew (fol. 4<sup>v</sup>).<sup>77</sup>

The figures of the Harbaville triptych, on the other hand, are conceived differently. One main difference is that the figures are carved in much flatter relief with almost no undercutting; this is made even more clear visually by the fact that their feet are at an angle with respect to the ground. Even the throne of Christ has been represented without perspective, so that the front and back legs appear on one plane. Although the figures have retained a statuesque quality, their proportions have been elongated and their bodies flattened. Here the artist has left larger areas of the garments free from creases; the folds that do exist are flat with sharp, straight edges. The wavy, zigzag endings of the garments in the Palazzo Venezia triptych have been reduced, and with them the whole roundness and voluminous appearance of the figures. The garments appear smoother and softer in contrast to those of the Palazzo Venezia triptych, where the dense drapery seems as if it were of a heavier fabric. These two works exhibit a different conception of the human figure. The difference lies not so much in the individual shapes of folds and draperies, which are standard vocabulary, but in the general treatment of a given figure and the impression it makes. The appearance of elegance and reserved plasticity which characterizes the figures of the Harbaville triptych is reflected in its whole setting as well. For example, the thin strips that divide the registers contrast with the thick and wide borders that frame the individual groups in the Palazzo Venezia triptych.<sup>78</sup>

The same differences in conception and style distinguish the Romanos plaque from the two other coronation ivories which were dated to the tenth century in the ivory corpus. These are the coronation of Constantine VII

<sup>76</sup> K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1935), fig. 172.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 151.

<sup>78</sup> In their presentation of the Romanos group Goldschmidt and Weitzmann placed the third closely related triptych, now in the Vatican museum, between the Palazzo Venezia and the Harbaville triptychs in terms of stylistic development (*Elfenbeinskulpturen*, no. 32a-b, pp. 16-17, pls. xi and xii). The date assigned to all three was the middle of the tenth century. In my opinion, these three works should be placed farther apart in time from each other. The main criteria in the discussion of Goldschmidt and Weitzmann are the carving technique, iconography, style, and general layout; these considerations make the placement of the Vatican triptych as the second in the series quite convincing, since the Vatican piece clearly has elements related to both triptychs. Its figures have retained some of the volume and plasticity of the figures of the Palazzo Venezia triptych, and its composition reflects the same strong regularity. On the other hand, the Vatican triptych already shows the iconographic changes present in the Harbaville triptych: the enthroned Christ in the Deesis, the military dress worn by the soldier-saints, and the medallions. The elements which create a feeling of overdecorativeness and crowding in the Vatican piece have been simplified or altogether left out in the Harbaville triptych. For example, the central row of medallions, whose inclusion forced the Vatican artist to reduce the space for the Deesis and to produce disproportionately small heads in the Deesis group, have been omitted. Further, the medallions in the wings of the Harbaville triptych have become simpler; their borders are plain, without the continuous zigzag pattern. The whole impression created by the Harbaville triptych is that of simplification and elimination. The Vatican triptych should be seen as a product of the beginning of the eleventh century. The change of dress in the military saints should be considered as one of the factors for dating it later than the middle of the tenth century. The dating of the Harbaville triptych in the later 60's of the eleventh century consequently enables us to place these three triptychs sufficiently far apart from each other to allow for the conceptual changes in style and composition.

Porphyrogennetos in Moscow (fig. 17), dated *ca.* 945,<sup>79</sup> and the coronation of Otto and Theophano in the Cluny Museum (fig. 13),<sup>80</sup> which, with its generally accepted date of 982/83, is the most precisely dated ivory in the sphere of Middle Byzantine ivory production. The figure of Christ offers the best source of stylistic comparison between these pieces.<sup>81</sup> The two tenth-century works immediately convey their allegiance to the Macedonian Renaissance figure style. In both, the different parts of the body are clearly articulated. The right leg of Christ in the Moscow plaque is almost completely exposed by the soft drapery which clings to his leg. In a similar fashion narrow curving lines distinguish the area of the stomach. Even Constantine, who wears a straight tunic under the *loros*, is represented with both his legs clearly distinguishable under his garment. This kind of drapery is also present in the figures of Christ and John of the Deesis in the Palazzo Venezia triptych. This treatment of the drapery for the modeling of the human figure can be compared with the figures in the scene of the Carrying of the Arc in the Leo Bible, Vatican, cod. reg. gr. 1, folio 8<sup>r</sup> (fig. 19), or with the figure of Jonah at the top left in his sermon to the Ninevites on a full-page miniature of the Paris Psalter, folio 431<sup>v</sup> (fig. 18).<sup>82</sup> Here, too, the legs project distinctly through the garment that is pulled over them, and the same curvilinear folds describe the stomach area.

The Christ figure on the Otto plaque, although made on Italian soil,<sup>83</sup> retains all the characteristics of the tenth-century Byzantine figure style and, without doubt, must have been based on a Byzantine prototype. Though the Romanos Christ figure has often been referred to as its model, a closer comparison will reveal the same differences that have been established between the Palazzo Venezia and Harbaville triptychs. Both Christs are draped very similarly and the folds concentrate and fall in similar areas. Yet the Christ on the Otto ivory reflects the interests of the tenth century. Plasticity and body articulation are much more pronounced than on the Christ figure of the Romanos ivory. An effort was made to reveal, for example, His knee and lower right leg, not only by the simple indentation which the outline of His leg creates but also by the difference in the height of relief, which makes the knee project forward. A similar treatment can be observed in the stomach

<sup>79</sup> The date of the Moscow ivory and the identification of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos were first persuasively shown by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann in the corpus through the evidence of coinage (*Elfenbeinskulpturen*, no. 35, pl. xiv, pp. 35–36). Subsequently, Weitzmann, in his article "The Mandyliion and Constantine Porphyrogennetos," *CahArch*, 11 (1960), 163–84, by marshaling pictorial and textual evidence has established this identification beyond doubt.

<sup>80</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, no. 85, pl. xxxiv (*ca.* 972–83).

<sup>81</sup> It should be pointed out that all three plaques are carved in flatter relief than the central panels of the triptychs. Since the height of the relief generally depends on the function of the object, the lower relief here supports the suggestion made by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann that these were probably intended for use on book covers. A low relief would be necessary because of the exposed position on the outside surface of the book.

<sup>82</sup> *Miniature della Bibbia Cod. Vat. Reg. gr. 1, e del Salterio Cod. Vat. Palat. gr. 381*, Collezione Paleografica Vaticana, fasc. 1 (Milan, 1905), pl. 8; H. Buchthal, *The Miniatures of the Paris Psalter* (London, 1938), fig. 12; and *idem*, "The Exaltation of David," *JWarb*, 37 (1974), 330–33, where he shows that the Paris Psalter is a copy made in the period after the death of Constantine VII.

<sup>83</sup> See note 53 *supra*; Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West*, 85; Schramm and Mutherich, *Denkmale*, 144, no. 73.

area, which is marked by semicircular incisions and an additional convexity in the relief. The same interests in the depiction of the body can be seen in a frontal Christ of a tenth-century miniature, Lavra cod. 86, folio 65<sup>r</sup> (fig. 14).<sup>84</sup> The right leg and knee as well as the stomach area are clearly articulated. In the miniature the dark lines on the garment make the modeling visually clear; on the ivory, the deep-cut folds and round modeling of the drapery give the impression of a bulky, heavy material, especially in areas like the large waistband and the falling drapery over Christ's shoulder and arm. In contrast, the same material that wraps around the waist of the Romanos Christ looks almost ironed on the figure. The folds that lie in several layers on top of each other have a surface that is flat; the creases are sharp and not rounded. The whole figure appears less voluminous. Empty triangular areas are distributed over the body and accompanied by straight lines; the soft modeling of the flat surfaces played off against the linear sharpness creates a figure which appears without physical bodily substance but at the same time with bodily presence. The suppedion on which Christ stands, one of the most elaborate constructions of its sort, shows the same lack of physical substance. It allows Christ to rise effortlessly above the heads of the imperial couple; had it not been shown in this tilted and flattened fashion to minimize its volume, it would have created an extreme visual obstruction.<sup>85</sup>

The stylistic differentiae of the Romanos and Harbaville ivories fit comfortably into our notions of the style of the latter half of the eleventh century.<sup>86</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann saw these stylistic distinctions, but preferred to explain them by supposing that there was competition among the artists of a single workshop. More recently, Weitzmann has spoken of a development within the group "towards taller proportions."<sup>87</sup> A more satisfactory explanation for these differences is to extract the Romanos and related ivories from the group and to regard them as works of a later period, for the historical evidence I have presented is consistent with the admittedly more subjective notion of eleventh-century style. Weitzmann himself applies to the style of the Romanos ivories a vocabulary more appropriate to the style of the eleventh century when he says that the development "towards taller proportions" within the group "must be understood as an attempt to dematerialize and thereby spiritualize the human body."<sup>88</sup> These are, of course, abstractions based on many careful observations, yet the abstractions return more easily to the actuality of eleventh-century art than to that of the tenth century. The primary notion I have discussed is figure style. The figure style related

<sup>84</sup> Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei*, pl. LII, fig. 310.

<sup>85</sup> In contrast, the artist of the Ottonian piece has made the scale of the figures different. Christ has been made one and one-half times the size of the imperial couple, so that He can place His hands on their heads. This difference in scale and the drawn curtains in the background make the composition unsatisfactory.

<sup>86</sup> V. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), 185–86; K. Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century," *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination* (Chicago, 1971), 271–313.

<sup>87</sup> Weitzmann, "Ivory Sculpture of the Macedonian Renaissance" (note 10 *supra*), 5.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

to the Romanos ivory can be traced already in some of the figures in the Menologion of Basil II (Vatican, cod. gr. 1613), dated *ca.* 1000, especially in the more hieratic representations of standing praying figures.<sup>89</sup> The famous Lectionary of Dionysiou (cod. 587), a manuscript almost contemporary with the Romanos and Harbaville ivories, affords good stylistic comparisons. For example, the miniature of the Holy Fathers on folio 126<sup>r</sup> (fig. 20),<sup>90</sup> which is of an iconic or hieratic nature, shows very close parallels to the group of apostles in the Harbaville triptych. The figures, although wearing different types of dress, are conceived in similar fashion. Their garments fall straight in flat folds creating the same restrained plasticity. Only the heads, as on the ivories, have retained greater volume. In another such miniature from the same manuscript, the representation of All Saints on folio 40<sup>v</sup>,<sup>91</sup> the saints on either side of the Fathers can be compared with the standing saints on the wings of the Harbaville triptych.

Without trying at this point to suggest a reorganization of the entire Romanos group, I would like to present some of the pieces which I consider closest to the Romanos and Harbaville plaques and which should thus be dated to the second half of the eleventh century. Two pieces with very similar iconography are the triptychs of the Crucifixion in the British Museum (fig. 22) and in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris (fig. 23).<sup>92</sup> They display very close parallels to the Romanos ivory, not only in the figure style but also in the details of the facial types and in the execution of the eyes and hair. Other details that mark these ivories as works of excellent quality are the fine incised line that runs along the inner border of the frames and the careful attention that has been given to the halo of Christ. In the center of the cross-bars a ridge is formed which creates two concave strips, which, when gilded, must have reflected the light more than the other haloes in the triptychs. Another related piece is the diptych now split between Hannover and Dresden (figs. 24, 25).<sup>93</sup> Combined, the two wings represent four scenes of the life cycle of Christ. Although the scenes are in a more narrative mode, so that some of the figures are more animated, there cannot be any doubt of their closeness to the Romanos style. A final example is a plaque, now in Berlin decorating a manuscript, which originally was the central plaque of a triptych (fig. 21).<sup>94</sup> It shows Christ enthroned holding the Gospels on His left knee and blessing with His right hand. The Virgin and John the Baptist appear as busts on either side of His head to form an abbreviated version of the standard Deesis. Michael and Gabriel, with scepter and globe in their hands, accompany them from above. The head of Christ especially reveals very close stylistic affinities with the Romanos and Harbaville Christ figures. The eyes are large and have slightly heavy lids; the halo shows again the careful finishing touches in the

<sup>89</sup> *Il Menologio di Basilio II*, Codices e Vaticanis Selecti, VIII (Turin, 1907), 106, 107, 130.

<sup>90</sup> S. M. Pelekanides, P. C. Christou, *et al.*, *The Treasures of Mount Athos*, I (Athens, 1973), fig. 247.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 215.

<sup>92</sup> Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 36, no. 38, and 37, no. 39.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 37, nos. 40 and 41.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 42, no. 55. Cf. Keck and Morey, *op. cit.* (note 11 *supra*), 401.

crossbars. The thin double columns with a knot in the center do not appear in Byzantine art before *ca.* 1000, and the half-length figures that surround Christ make their appearance in greater number during the eleventh century: these additional iconographic details place this piece most comfortably within this period.

In my mind there can be no hesitation about placing the Romanos ivory and the pieces related to it in the third quarter of the eleventh century. Their style stands well within the tradition which several decades later led to the mosaic decoration of Daphni. The ivories are products of a workshop which had a close connection with the imperial court; they stand out not only because of their monumental simplicity and restraint in composition and figure style, but also because of their very high quality. Reading Psellos' description of the image he projects of court life in the decades before Manzikert, it is not hard to imagine that ivory panels and icons such as these were the kind of luxury objects upon which the court lavished its wealth. It is when the highest quality of court art combines with the ideal Byzantine restraint that the dating of art objects is most difficult and most in need of documentary evidence. Other works of Byzantine art of exceptional quality—for example, the large Deesis mosaic in Hagia Sophia—are still awaiting an outside factor to determine with certainty the date of their production.

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